

NE 26. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the first zone and second zones each comprise a first plastic material.

NE 27. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone defines a cavity.

28. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone comprises at least one filler material.

29. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 28, wherein adjacent said zones comprise different filler materials.

30. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone comprises a colorant.

31. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein adjacent said zones comprise different colorants.

32. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the region of preferred breaking is a re-fused region of plastic extrudate defined at an interface between adjacent said zones.

33. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said zones are arranged in approximately mirror symmetry with an axis of the bristle.

34. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said zones are arranged approximately in point symmetry with an axis of the bristle.

35. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said first and second zones each occupy approximately equal portions of the cross-sectional area.

36. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a free end of the bristle is split over the preferred breaking region directed along a longitudinal axis of the bristle.

37. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 36, wherein the split region extends between approximately 10% and approximately 25% of a length of the bristle.

38. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a free end of the bristle is rounded.

39. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the bristle comprises a plastic selected from a group of plastics consisting of polyester, polyamide and mixtures thereof.

40. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a major lateral dimension of the cross-sectional area of the monofilament is between 0.1 mm and 0.25 mm.

41. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 40, wherein the lateral dimension is between 0.15 mm and 0.18 mm.

42. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 40, wherein the lateral dimension is a diameter.

43. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the cross-sectional area comprises a shape selected from a group of shapes consisting of a three-leaf clover, a multiple-leaf clover, a three-point star and a multiple-point star.

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44. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a circumferential surface of the monofilament has a helical structure.

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45. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 27, further comprising a second plastic material contained within said cavity and extending across at least a portion of a cross-sectional area of the cavity.

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46. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 45, wherein said second plastic material fills the cross-sectional area of the cavity.

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47. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 45, wherein said second plastic material is different from a plastic material defining a portion of a boundary of said cavity.

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48. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said region of preferred breaking is at least partially defined by a void adjacent said first and second zones.

49. (Amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said region of preferred breaking is at least partially defined by at least one indentation on an exterior surface of said bristle at a location adjacent said first and second zones.

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50. (Amended). A method of manufacturing a toothbrush having a toothbrush bristle, comprising the steps of

- forming a plastic monofilament having a cross-sectional area,
- forming a first zone disposed over a first portion of said cross-sectional area,
- forming a second zone disposed over a second portion of said cross-sectional area adjacent said first portion,
- forming an interface between adjoining said first and second zones to define a region of preferred breaking along which said first and second zone are frangible,
- providing a bristle carrier, and
- mounting an end of the bristle to the bristle carrier. --

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51. The method of claim 50, wherein the first zone is formed comprising a first plastic material, the second zone is formed comprising a second plastic material, and wherein said first plastic material differs from said second plastic material.

52. The method of claim 50, wherein the first zone and second zones are each formed comprising a first plastic material.

53. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one said zone forms a boundary of a cavity.

54. The method of claim 50, wherein the first zone and second zones are formed by the steps of dividing and subsequently rejoining a melt flow forming the monofilament.

55. The method of claim 50, further comprising the steps of
twisting the monofilament about its longitudinal axis, and
fixing the twisted monofilament.

56. The method of claim 50, wherein the step of fixing further comprises treating with a chemical agent.